



Float Plans - Nothing but Upside...

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As we often pine to be afloat with a deck beneath our feet, we might even feel compelled to venture out with proper planning. If so, the Float Plan, oft spoken of and more often ignored, can be key for you and those closest to you. That's what this column is about.

Float Plan

The Float Plan is nominally known as a mechanism for ensuring that missing vessels are indeed missed in time for action to be taken that might otherwise lead to the rescue of the crew rather than the recovery of their bodies. "Boat-A is supposed to be at Payne's Marina in the Great Salt Pond on Block Island at this time and date. Is it there?"

So, in a nutshell, float plans are all about SOLAS - Safety Of Life At Sea. However, as the title infers, the development of a float plan delivers nothing but upside to the boat's master and thus to the crew who are fully the master's responsibility.

Charting

The ideal float plan involves the detailed analysis of getting to your destination and returning safely. The float plan provides the opportunity for the skipper to sit with his or her charts, in the calm of a kitchen, den or study, and literally walk through the passage with parallel rulers and dividers.

What is the goal of such detailed analysis? The net effect is to create your own Pilot Guide for the entire passage and to be able to assign predicted times to each leg. Deviation from predicted times is an early warning to the skipper that something is up - working against (or with!) a current, cross winds creating additional work effort for the engines to hold course, etc. All of this translates into fuel consumption "deltas" which ultimately leads directly to

SOLAS issues - Safety Of Life At Sea...

If you have made an error in the development of your pilot guide, the rest of the guide is likely to be suspect and you'll have to do what every skipper has done for centuries untold - improvise carefully... If the chart is generally consistent but winds and tides have done the inevitable, then the overall pilot guide is likely to still have integrity but, once again, you'll have to do what every skipper has done for centuries untold - improvise carefully...

Weather

With respect to predicting the weather, I use the Weather.com website - www.weather.com - and the reason I do is because I can get weather prediction by the hour. If the chance of precipitation for a particular day is 50%, but it is 10% in the morning and 90% in the afternoon, I want to know that. Put in your zip code or city name and click go...

Click on "More Details" and see how the hourly details add to the weather analysis...

Tides

Nothing is more likely to surprise you and more potentially perilous to happen than running aground - and understanding the tide is all about that. There are several good services to use but there is something very subtle about tide analysis that no chart gives you.

Tides change at different rates at different places (watch for a column here soon where we'll talk Time and Tides.) Knowing the tides at an inlet while spending the next six hours transiting from cove to bay "on the inside" could require major mental gymnastics in order to keep pace with the pace of the tide as it works its way through that inlet and across the bays and into the coves...

Why do that if the internet can do it for you?

Local Notice to Mariners

As of April 1, 2004, the United States Coast Guard stopped mailing the Local Notice to Mariners. Instead, it is accessible on the Internet - and they will even email you a link to the updates each week as they "go to press."

The electronic versions of LNM appear on the U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center's Website at <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=LNMlistRegistration>

Why go out upon the briny deep with less information than there is available to you? What's the upside in that? Go on their web site, click around until you find the area for you to put your email address in - and from then on get, direct from the United States Coast Guard forevermore, the latest they know about what is happening "out there..." For free...

Battening Down the Hatches

So, in summary, a complete float plan - left with someone responsible and capable of checking on you over the course of your passageway - encompasses all of these components... And a prayer...

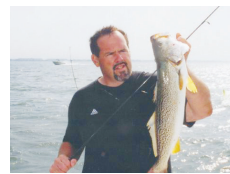
Dear Lord,
Your Sea is so wide...
And my boat is so small...
Protect me.
Amen!

BTW, if you are interested in being part of USCG Forces, email me at JoinUSCGAux@aol.com or go direct to the D1SR Human Resources department, who are in charge of new members matters, at DSO-HR and we will help you "get in this thing..."

Tides for Moriches Inlet starting with August 7, 2013

Day	High/Low	Tide Time	Height Feet	Sunrise/Sunset	Moon Time	% Moon Visible
Wed. 7	Low	1:49 AM	0.1	5:54 AM 7:59 PM	Rise 6:40 AM Set 8:04 PM	0
	High	7:59 AM	3.0			
	Low	1:52 PM	0.2			
	High	8:02 PM	3.3			
Thur. 8	Low	2:26 AM	0.1	5:55 AM 7:58 PM	Rise 7:40 AM Set 8:34 PM	0
	High	8:35 AM	3.0			
	Low	2:32 PM	0.2			
	High	8:36 PM	3.3			
Fri. 9	Low	3:01 AM	0.1	5:56 AM 7:57 PM	Rise 8:40 AM Set 9:03 PM	3
	High	9:11 AM	3.1			
	Low	3:11 PM	0.2			
	High	9:11 PM	3.2			
Sat. 10	Low	3:34 AM	0.1	5:57 AM 7:56 PM	Rise 9:42 AM Set 9:34 PM	8
	High	9:49 AM	3.1			
	Low	3:50 PM	0.3			
	High	9:50 PM	3.1			
Sun. 11	Low	4:06 AM	0.1	5:58 AM 7:54 PM	Rise 10:45 AM Set 10:06 PM	15
	High	10:31 AM	3.2			
	Low	4:31 PM	0.4			
	High	10:35 PM	3.0			
Mon. 12	Low	4:42 AM	0.2	5:59 AM 7:53 PM	Rise 11:49 AM Set 10:41 PM	23
	High	11:18 AM	3.2			
	Low	5:19 PM	0.4			
	High	11:28 PM	2.9			
Tues. 13	Low	5:25 AM	0.3	6:00 AM 7:52 PM	Rise 12:54 PM Set 11:21 PM	32
	High	12:10 PM	3.2			
	Low	6:20 PM	0.5			
	High	6:20 PM	0.5			
Wed. 14	High	12:26 AM	2.9	6:01 AM 7:50 PM	Rise 2:00 PM	43
	Low	6:23 AM	0.4			
	High	1:06 PM	3.3			
	Low	7:34 PM	0.5			

Weather Forecast	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
E Moriches, NY (11940)	Aug 7	Aug 8	Aug 9	Aug 10	Aug 11	Aug 12	Aug 13	Aug 14
	PM T-Storms	Scattered T-Storms	Scattered T-Storms	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy
	76°F 69°F	79°F 71°F	79°F 72°F	83°F 65°F	79°F 64°F	78°F 65°F	80°F 66°F	78°F 65°F



by TONY SALERNO

FISHING WITH TONY

Senate Hears Support for Flexibility for Magnuson Reform

That's the message heard by members of the Senate Subcommittee on Oceans, Atmosphere, Fisheries, and Coast Guard in a July 23 hearing looking at New England and Mid-Atlantic region perspectives on the upcoming reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. It's also a message greatly appreciated by the Recreational Fishing Alliance (RFA) which has spent the past seven years trying to build support for reforming the federal fisheries law to provide a better balance of commerce, conservation and access for recreational fishermen.

In opening testimony from a three-member panel of fisheries managers, a common theme was that changes made in the 2006/2007 reauthorization of the Act have had a major impact on the socioeconomic state of both commercial and recreational fisheries in the Northeast region, and not all of it good.

"When reauthorized in 2007, the Act gave the eight Regional Fishery Management Councils and NMFS a very clear charge and some new tools to support improved science and management," said John Bullard, Northeast Regional Administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). "While significant progress has been made since the last reauthorization, we recognize that this progress has not come without a cost."

Among the initiatives included in the reauthorization of Magnuson, Bullard noted specifically how the law "mandated the use of science-based annual catch limits and accountability measures to prevent and end overfishing, provided for market-based fishery management through Limited Access Privilege Programs or catch shares, focused on collaborative research with the fishing industry and by catch reduction, (and) addressed the need to improve the science used to inform fisheries management."

"Managing fisheries using annual catch limits and accountability measures was a major change for some fisheries, and the initial implementation has identified some areas where we can improve that process," Bullard noted in his testimony, adding "The U.S. now has effective tools to address marine fisheries management, and as we look to the future, we must look for opportunities to increase flexibility in our management system."

At the time of the vote, Bullard himself noted specifically the words of MAFMC member Tony Dilernia (NY) that the federal government may actually be closing down the 2014 black sea bass fishery because the stock is simply too healthy. "So I'm scratching my head saying we're closing the fishery 'cause there's too many fish, so that doesn't make sense, right?" Bullard noted in December, adding "in 2014 that's what we'd be doing, and so this is the problem we have to solve." Stay tuned.